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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-03 SP-02 L-01 ACDA-10 TRSE-00 PRS-01
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----------272051Z 012603 /45
R 271330Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 385
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 2231

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, NL
SUBJ: NATO SUMMIT: THE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS OF DEN UYL
AND VAN DER STOEL

1. IN CONNECTION WITH WASHINGTON PREPARATIONS FOR NATO SUMMIT, WE SHOULD LIKE TO DRAW ATTENTION TO KNOWN BUT LITTLE NOTICED POINT WHICH WE HAVE MENTIONED FROM TIME TO TIME IN EARLIER REPORTING AND WHICH RELATES TO ANOMALOUS FACT THAT DUTCH PRIME MINISTER LACKS COMPETENCE TO SPEAK FOR GON IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. UNDER DUTCH CONSTITUTION THE AREA IS EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF FOREIGN MINISTER. THE PRIME MINISTER MERELY HAS THE COMPETENCE TO COORDINATE THE WORK OF THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES.

2. WITH THE ADVENT OF EC, NATO AND OTHER SUMMITS, DUTCH PRIME AND FOREIGN MINISTERS HAVE INCREASINGLY BEEN CONFRONTED WITH NEED TO ADJUST THEMSELVES TO SITUATION IN WHICH PRIME MINISTER IS CALLED TO ACT ABROAD AS PRINCIPAL SPOKESMAN FOR THE NETHERLLANDS, EVEN THOUGH COMPETENCE AND CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA IS NOT HIS BUT
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EXCLUSIVELY THAT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER. SO FAR DEN UYL AND VAN DER STOEL HAVE MANAGED TO COPE WITH THIS ANOMALOUS SITUATION. THIS HAS BEEN FACILITATED BY THE FACT THAT DEN UYL IS THE UNQUESTIONED LEADER OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF WHICH VAN DER STOEL IS A LOYAL MEMBER OF LONG STANDING. BY TEMPERAMENT, TOO, THE TWO MEN HAVE FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO ACCOMMODATE EACH OTHER. DEN UYL HAS FREQUENTLY HAD VAN DER STOEL AT

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HIS SIDE, AND VAN DER STOEL IN HIS TURN HAS NOT BEGRUDGED
DEN UYL THE FOCUS OF PUBLICITY.

3. THE FACT THAT IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO LIVE WITH THIS
ANOMALY DOES NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS IN
THE BACKGROUND. THERE IS A PRONOUNCED AVERSION AT SENIOR LEVELS
IN THE MFA TO THE ROLE DEN UYL HAS BEEN PLAYING ABROAD.
ALSO, EVEN THE MODEST VAN DER STOEL IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN
ANNOYED WWHEN AMBASSADORS IN THE HAGUE SOUGHT TO DEVELOP DIRECT
CONTACTS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE
FOREIGN MINISTRY (THROUGH THIS EMBASSY HAS NEVER HAD ANY
SUCH PROBLEM). IN ANOTHER CABINET, PARTICULARLY ONE IN WHICH
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT
BE DIFFERENT, THERE COULD BE DIFFICULTIES.

4. WE DO NOT THINK THAT THIS WILL BE A PROBLEM AT THE NATO
SUMMIT. DEN UYL INTENDS TO HAVE VAN DER STOEL ATTEND
BILATERAL WITH THE PRESIDENT (THE HAGUE 2198). BOTH WILL BE
PRESENT AT THE NATO SESSION ON MAY 10 (THVOUGH DEN UYL PRE-
SUMABLY WILL ACT AS THE GON SPOKESMAN). THE NOTION OF SEPARATE
LUNCHES MAY 10 POSED SOMEWHAT OF A PROBLEM HERE, BUT THE DUTCH
DID NOT MAKE WAVES ABOUT IT.

6. IN SCHEDULING OUR CONTACTS WITH DUTCH AT NATO SUMMIT AND
IN FORMAL MEETINGS THE FOREGOING SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND.
OBVIOUSLY, DEN UYL, WHO MAY WELL BE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER,
MERITS TOP ATTENTION. AT THE SAME TIME., WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL
NOT TO EMBARRASS VAN DER STOEL. HE HAS BEEN A TOWER OF
STRENGTH IN THE NETHERLANDS AND WITHIN HIS PARTY IN DEFENSE
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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